

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 4, 2010

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Sebelius:

We are writing in strong support of The Ohio State University's application for funding from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Infrastructure to Expand Access to Care Program. If awarded this funding, The Ohio State University would be able to carry out a comprehensive and innovative expansion – dubbed ProjectONE – of The Ohio State University Medical Center, including the James Cancer Hospital and Solove Research Institute.

The Expand Access to Care Program, created by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, will provide funding to meet the cost of projects for debt service on, or direct construction or renovation of a health care facility that provides research, inpatient tertiary care, or outpatient clinical services. To be eligible for funding, proposed new health care facilities must be critical for the provision of greater access to health care within a state and the funding must be essential for the continued viability of the state's sole medical and dental school and its academic health center.

ProjectONE meets those requirements. This construction project builds upon a unique transformative design that unifies and integrates clinical care, research facilities, and education on each floor. This integrated approach to personalized medicine holds the promise of speeding the translation of research into tangible results in patient care. Researchers, clinicians, and educators would have the opportunity to work side-by-side to accelerate research and optimize patient care. The architectural integration of research and educational space within the clinical care areas would lead to more treatment and prevention programs, as research rapidly progresses from bench to bedside. And increased training of future healthcare providers would dramatically expand access to care beyond what would be possible with just a physical space expansion.

The Ohio State University Medical Center believes that to remain viable while ensuring access to care for the diverse urban, suburban, and rural populations within its service area, the Center must maximize efficiency, integrate its activities, and actively seek to address the unique constellation of needs that define the Ohio population. Not only does Ohio have an alarmingly high cancer rate, it ranks above the national average across a range of other health indicators, including childhood and adult obesity, smoking, diabetes, asthma, low birthweight, and adult disability.

The Ohio State University Medical Center is committed to earning its longevity by creating the infrastructure needed to support coordinated, cost-effective, and patient-centered services that reflect the needs of its patient base and to set the course for the future of medicine. By integrating these services with cutting-edge research, tested and refined through its Center for Clinical and Translational Science, and high quality interdisciplinary medical, dental and other health sciences education, the Center can and will be able to serve Ohioans for years to come.

As our state's sole public medical and dental school and an academic health center, The Ohio State University Medical Center serves patients in every county of our State. It is also one of the Centers across the nation to obtain the National Cancer Institute's (NCI) prestigious Comprehensive Cancer Center designation. In a state like Ohio – which ranks 8th among all states in cancer mortality and includes rural, urban, and under-represented populations – it is imperative that we support institutions in their efforts to treat patients suffering from a disproportionate burden of cancer incidence and mortality, and are under-represented in cancer clinical trials. OSU's colleges of Medicine and Public Health regularly conducts NCI sponsored health services research, outreach, screening and education in many of the 33 Appalachian counties that span Ohio's southern tier, disseminating discovery, innovation and knowledge to the doorsteps of those in need.

It is also noteworthy that both the Medical Center and the James are nearing or at capacity, and want to continue to meet demand, providing access to quality care and superb treatments for all our constituents. The overall cost of the ProjectONE expansion is more than \$1 billion, which makes it the single largest construction project of any currently underway in Ohio and will have significant economic impact for Ohio, creating a dramatic increase in annual revenue and job growth for our economically-distressed state. The Medical Center anticipates that this proposed project would bring 5,000 construction jobs and 10,000 full time (6,000 direct and 4,000 indirect) permanent jobs to Ohio – a state desperately in need of new job growth.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this grant application.

Sincerely,



George V. Voinovich
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator